

Chapter 3



The Plan

Vision

Development of a vision for the district was heavily influenced by the strong desires of the community to look at the future as a goal and plan for sustainable revitalization. As a whole, the community sees itself as a distinct urban enclave, with good neighborhoods bordered in several directions by natural barriers and woodlands. The citizens see Kennedy Avenue as the “Gateway” which should have ample sidewalks, large trees reaching over the street, and attractive pedestrian scaled streetlights. The community also sees itself as a host for a variety of cultural events, including the arts, entertainment, and musical competitions. It also envisions Downtown as a gathering place for young and old alike and the social center of the community. Other desires of the community include:

- Maintain small town character and community identity;
- Well-designed community with distinct commercial buildings, well maintained streetscaping and unique artistic features;
- Well-planned vehicular, bike and pedestrian routes linked to other local and regional facilities;
- More areas for senior citizens and children;
- More community activities for everyone;
- Healthy and vibrant downtown where people can shop, play, work, and live;
- Preserving downtown and use of the existing commercial structures for mixed uses.

These components of an “ideal Highland” were translated into the goals that the Arsh Group has used to develop the following redevelopment plan.

Goals

In formulation of the redevelopment goals, the input received from the stakeholders and citizens in the community workshops have played a significant role. The goals also reflect the Redevelopment Commission's initial goals for the revitalization of the District.

1. *Eliminate the Blight:*

This means the elimination and prevention of the spread of blight and deterioration. Included are the re-planning, redesign, and development of areas that are stagnant or improperly utilized.

2. *Attract New Investments:*

The promotion of new and continuing private sector investment within the study area will help to prevent the loss of tax base and facilitate growth.

3. *Insist on Quality Design:*

The achievement of an environment which reflects a high level of concern for architectural, landscape, urban design, and land use principles.

4. *Jobs for the Neighborhood:*

The creation and development of local job opportunities and the preservation of the area's existing employment base.



5. **Enhance Public Facilities:**

The enhancement of current public facilities will enhance Highland's character and serve the residents more effectively.

6. **Encourage Commercial Development:**

The retention, expansion and promotion of businesses by means of redevelopment, rehabilitation, and new construction will bring new vitality to the district.

7. **Green the Streets:**

The promotion of a complete street strategy, which will enhance streets as public places to be enjoyed by drivers and pedestrians, will strengthen the long-term competitiveness of the study area.

8. **Create a Dynamic Business Environment:**

The reinvention of the District as a place for work, play, and live, by supporting a mix of uses, activities, and marketing strategies which will enhance creation of an 18-hour environment that is vibrant and supported both locally and regionally.



The district should be a dynamic environment, being able to support a strong variety of uses at all times.



New construction will help to attract new businesses.



Street enhancements will improve the character of the district.



Streets should be "complete", meaning they should be safe and accessible for all users.